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RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001329

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E WILLIAMSON, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [EAID](#) [KPKO](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: REGIME INSIDER ACKNOWLEDGES KALMA CAMP MASSACRE,
IN PRIVATE

REF: A. KHARTOUM 1315

[1](#)B. STATE 93239

[1](#)C. 07 KHARTOUM 1989

[1](#)D. 07 KHARTOUM 1987

[1](#)E. 07 KHARTOUM 1795

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: CDA Fernandez called on MFA Undersecretary Muttriff Siddiq September 1 to discuss the Kalma Camp attack. CDA Fernandez told Siddiq that events in Kalma camp in South Darfur constituted a massacre of civilians, including many women and children, and urged the GOS to bring the perpetrators to justice in a swift and transparent manner. He also expressed concern for the public behavior of the defendants and observers of the John Granville murder trial, and called on Siddiq to keep a close eye on proceedings as they unfold. Siddiq did not disagree with CDA Fernandez's characterization of Kalma camp, and expressed appreciation for the USG's restraint in reacting to the incident. He stated that the killings were not ordered by Khartoum, that security forces have been given strict orders to back off from the camp, and that President Bashir has ordered a serious investigation into Kalma, but that any fallout from the incident would likely occur out of the public eye. CDA Fernandez also urged Siddiq to allow him to travel to Kalma camp during the week of September 8, but Siddiq was non-committal. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) CDA Fernandez noted that the U.S. had explicitly and repeatedly warned the GOS in November 2007 about unilateral, violent action in Kalma Camp. CDA had spoken to Siddiq, to the South Darfur Governor and to the Humanitarian Affairs Commissioner at that time. Then U/S Henrietta Fore and SE Natsios had delivered similar messages. The regime had then agreed not to take such action and to coordinate its steps with UNAMID (AMIS at that time) and with NGOs (reftels c-e). Fernandez expressed grave concern about the August 25 military incursion at Kalma camp (reftel a) describing it as a dangerous and foolish incident that is a setback to any plans to advance a dialogue with the US. He told Siddiq that information received by the Embassy showed that the Central Reserve Police had used high caliber weapons against defenseless civilians, and that it without a doubt constituted a massacre of women and children. Siddiq admitted this was essentially true. "I don't disagree with what you said," he stated, calling the Kalma incident a "stupid" act. He acknowledged that observers in Nyala have tied the Kalma camp incident to an August 8 visit there by the Ministers of Defense, Interior and Intelligence, but denied that Khartoum had played a role. Central government involvement in the Kalma incident was "doubtful," he said, adding "whoever

ordered this has hurt the government" noting the strenuous efforts by the regime to curry favor with the international community since the July 14 ICC announcement on a possible Bashir indictment. He did not offer any speculation about who bore responsibility but agreed that the Wali (Governor) of South Darfur was weak and ineffectual. CDA noted that Central Reserve Police units are not controlled by local government.

13. (C) Siddiq agreed with CDA that the incident was not only terribly unfortunate, but also extremely ill-timed given the ICC's deliberation on charges against President Bashir and the possibility of a resumption of bilateral talks with the USG. He acknowledged that the Kalma incident made favorable outcomes for either of these issues more difficult to achieve and even questioned whether someone was attempting to sabotage the NCP. "It's as if someone has designs on undermining the government," he mused. He stated that the President has ordered a full investigation, and noted that the actions taken by the Central Reserve Police in Kalma violated direct instructions from the President to avoid any activity in IDP camps without the involvement of the international community. "We want full transparency" in the camps, he said.

14. (C) Siddiq added that one of the IDP leaders who had been killed had actually met with President Bashir during his recent Darfur trip. He said that while there were big problems in Kalma Camp, like weapons, criminals and drugs, this did not excuse civilians being killed. CDA clarified that the civilians were killed by government forces, "these units are janjaweed in uniform," and not in some crossfire. He added that vehicle mounted anti-aircraft machine guns

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(12.7 mm "Dushkas") were turned on civilians. Siddiq responded that "the rebels also have Dushkas," and CDA Fernandez agreed but noted "they don't have them in Kalma Camp or in (GOS-held) Nyala." CDA told Siddiq that IDPs fear another similar attack in the coming days. Siddiq said that very strong and clear orders have been given to units not to go into the camp again (without UNAMID coordination) and even to back off from some IDPs who are blocking the Khartoum-Nyala railroad line just outside the camp in protest.

15. (C) Siddiq expressed appreciation for the USG's restraint to date in reacting to the Kalma camp incident. "The way you are handling this is helping, not hurting us," he said, describing how aggressive criticism of the regime causes it to cover for itself. CDA warned Siddiq that the situation may change when more information about the massacre becomes public. He told Siddiq that the only way for the NCP to get ahead of the story is to bring the perpetrators quickly to justice in a highly transparent and very public way. While agreeing that this was a good idea, Siddiq indicated that such steps are unlikely, and that any fallout from the incident would occur out of the public eye. CDA Fernandez recalled that Arab regimes often prefer to launder their dirty laundry in private but this is a situation where "if you have clean hands," the regime should act urgently and publicly. Siddiq ruefully admitted that "we will probably handle it like those regimes you describe." CDA urged Siddiq to allow him to travel to Kalma camp the week of September 8 (the request had been made before the attack), but Siddiq was non-committal.

16. (C) CDA also expressed concern about the conduct of some of those attending the trial of John Granville, which resumed on August 31 (septel.) He stated that while the USG fully believes in due process, respects Sudanese sovereignty and is not seeking to interfere in any way with the conduct of the trial, the behavior of some of those present was extremely disconcerting. He noted that a number of people outside the courtroom had treated the defendants as heroes. He also noted that at least one of the accused had spat on a western female correspondent covering the trial. Siddiq was receptive to the CDA's concerns.

17. (C) Comment: Despite a subdued Siddiq's frank acknowledgment of the difficulties created by the Kalma camp incident, it appears there will be no effort by the NCP to publicly arrest and try the perpetrators, despite our urging. At best, there may be a shuffling of responsible officials to other jobs and some quick blood money paid to the families. It is unclear whether the incursion into Kalma was ordered by Khartoum although this is, once again, a situation where the regime bears ultimate responsibility no matter who gave a specific order. In some ways it would be even more disturbing if a rogue unit from the Central Reserve Police bore responsibility without orders from Khartoum. Some of Central Reserve Police units in Darfur are composed of former janjaweed fighters (now incorporated into the Ministry of Interior as CRP) whom the regime believes it needs to assert control in the region. Thus, it is unlikely the NCP would take strong action against such CRP members. This is a mistake because the regime needs to hold those in its ranks accountable (in addition to demonstrating greater command and control) if it has any possible chance of finding a solution to the Darfur conflict, not to mention making real progress in its already poor relationship with the West.

FERNANDEZ